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## Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland.

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray:

Almighty God, most holy, in whom we live and dwell and have our being, we praise You and lift our hearts in gratitude. Hear our intercession for the Members of this body.

Lead our lawmakers as You led Your people once by a pillar of cloud through the day and a pillar of fire by night. Give our Senators more love and more self-denial. Make them kindly in thought, gentle in words, and generous in deeds. Teach them that it is better to give than to receive; better to forget themselves than to put themselves forward; better to serve than to be served. Give them the ability to discern the difference between the truth and the false as they test the issues through debates and hold fast to that which is good. Keep them close to You and open to each other as they serve You and country today. And unto You, the God of love, be all the glory and praise both now and for evermore. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, April 9, 2008.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. CARDIN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

### SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, if he chooses to make remarks, the Senate will proceed to a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators allowed to speak during that period of time for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders. The Republicans will control the first half; the majority will control the final half. Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3221, the legislative vehicle for housing.

Yesterday, cloture was invoked on the substitute amendment. If all postcloture debate time is used, debate will expire about 8:45 p.m. tonight. I will be discussing with the Republican leader how we can come to a final determination as to how we should handle the wrapup. The two managers have, I understand, about three or four germane amendments that need to be voted on, and they can be voted on now or we can wait until the time runs out. Those amendments, germane amendments that are pending, require votes. For those that have been filed and are

not pending, that is not the case, unless the two managers agree that they want to bring those up. So we will work our way through this legislation as quickly as we can.

### IRAQ WAR TESTIMONY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, yesterday's testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Foreign Relations Committee afforded General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker the opportunity to address the two central questions of the war in Iraq. No. 1: Has the troop surge brought us closer to the day when our troops can come home? Second, is the war in Iraq making America safer? By all accounts, the answer to both questions is no.

While General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker both deserve our gratitude for their hard work—and this is hard work under extraordinarily difficult circumstances—their testimony gave our country no reason to believe the strategy will change. President Bush himself described the purpose of the surge as giving the Iraqi Government and its people the space to achieve reconciliation. Recent violence and the intensifying struggle between al-Maliki and al-Sadr proved beyond any doubt the window we provided may be closing.

President Bush clings to his talking points that the surge is working, but he called his plan a return on success, meaning that if the surge worked, our troops could return home. If we have the success he claims, where is the return?

Since Monday, we have had 12 American soldiers killed in Iraq. We are stuck in the "Twilight Zone" in Iraq. When violence is up, the President says we can't bring our troops home. When violence is down, the President says we can't bring our troops home.

So it is long past time for the President to be honest with the American people: Under what circumstances

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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could our troops come home? Under what scenario could this war end? Based on everything we have heard, we can reach only one conclusion with 160,000 courageous American troops serving in Iraq. President Bush has an exit strategy for one person—and that is himself—on January 20 of next year.

Here is what three Senators had to say during yesterday's hearings. One Senator said:

I think Osama bin Laden is sitting back right now looking at this thing and saying, in effect, "We're kinda bankrupting this country."

Another Senator said:

I think people want a sense of what the end is going to look like.

A third Senator said:

Our patience is not unlimited.

All three of these questions were from Republican Senators yesterday.

To my Republican friends I say: Let's work together. We had the opportunity to change course in Iraq last summer, but Republicans who were willing to criticize the war proved unwilling to break with President Bush by voting against it. But it is not too late. Neither side is looking for a hasty withdrawal that would put our troops or the Iraqi people at undue risk. We want a smarter, more sustainable strategy that addresses all the national security challenges our Nation faces—from Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida safe haven in Pakistan, to winning the peace in Afghanistan, to rebuilding full combat readiness of our ground forces.

If we work together, Democrats and Republicans, we can set a new course that takes us responsibly out of Iraq and would focus on the global challenges that have gone overlooked for far too long.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

#### CONGRATULATING GENERAL PETRAEUS AND AMBASSADOR CROCKER

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, let me say briefly, I wish to offer my congratulations, along with those of others, to both General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker for their astonishingly good work over the last 9 to 12 months. In virtually every measurable way that you can look at Iraq, conditions have dramatically improved. That is a direct result of the smart military strategy that has put Iraq in a position where it can realistically aspire to be a relatively normal country by the standards of the Middle East and certainly an ally on the war on terror, which is extremely important.

I also think it is important for all of us to remember we have not been attacked here at home for almost 7 years—a direct result of the strategy of

getting on the offense and pushing back against those who would attack us here at home, which we have done both in Afghanistan and in Iraq.

So it was an opportunity, with the appearance of the general and the ambassador, to congratulate them for their outstanding work over the last year. We look forward to going forward in Iraq in a way that leaves behind a stable country that can make a positive contribution to the security of the United States here at home and in the Middle East.

I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, 71 percent of the American people believe that invasion of Iraq was a mistake, a foreign policy blunder, some say the worst this country has ever done, the worst foreign policy blunder—71 percent. During that poll, there were a few percentage points where people had no opinion. So about 15 percent of the people think the invasion of Iraq was the right decision. We must get our troops home. The sooner we do that, the better off we are.

I look forward to General Petraeus's and Ambassador Crocker's hearing today before the two relevant committees in the House. When this is all over and done with, we will be able to assess when we can have a better opportunity of bringing our troops home. As we indicated earlier today, it seems difficult—when the violence is up, we need more troops and when it is down we need more troops. We can't have it both ways.

The military is at a breaking point. I am not saying that; I am repeating what others have said. General Cody, who is a four-star general on Active Duty, has said he has never seen our military in such a state of disrepair as it is now. So things aren't glowingly good. We have to work together to try to rebuild our military, and one way we can do that is focus on getting the right number of troops to Afghanistan and rebuilding our military, which is, as General Cody said, in very bad shape.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the troops are coming home in an orderly way. Precipitous withdrawal we know would lead to a new haven for terrorists with the opportunity to attack us here at home. I think, clearly, we will debate this issue in the fall. The American people have this on their minds, obviously. They also have on their minds the economy, health care, and other matters. They are interested in their future. I think the American people are not interested in having additional attacks on the homeland in the future. That is something we will debate not only in the Senate but out on the campaign trail this fall.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, one of the things that will be debated this fall is whether our troops need to be in Iraq for another 50 or 100 years. I think that will be a pivotal part of the debate that takes place in the Presidential elections.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, of course, no one has said that, and my dear friend, the majority leader, knows it. That is a swipe at Senator McCain, who was talking about troop deployments overseas, not the continued engagement in warfare. The mainstream media—which has not been particularly friendly to the war—has hammered those who have accused Senator McCain of saying we were going to have a 100-year war in Iraq.

This is a deliberate misrepresentation of what he has said. Anybody who looks at the entire exchange, which occurred in a town meeting in New Hampshire back in January, knows precisely what he was saying. He was talking about having troops deployed overseas, which we have had in Germany and Japan and South Korea for many years. He was talking about a situation under which they are not under attack, not being killed or wounded but deployed overseas, not only to protect our security interests but also to reassure our allies. That is what Senator McCain was talking about. No one I know is suggesting—and it is almost laughable to suggest—that we are talking about that kind of lengthy military engagement.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if one of the Democratic hopefuls had said it, I would also be trying to spin it in a way that looked good. The fact is, you can't spin what Senator McCain said at that town hall meeting in a favorable light. His record speaks for itself as to how he feels about the war in Iraq.

My friend always talks about the fact the American people don't want attacks here. Of course, they don't want attacks here at home. Of course, they don't. Everyone should understand, though, that prior to the invasion of Iraq, there was not a terrorist in Iraq, and now, of course, there are lots of them. We need to focus on Osama bin Laden, on his safe haven he has in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and as General Casey—also an active member of the military—said, we need to get more troops into Afghanistan. We can't do that when we have 140,000 troops this July in Iraq.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, one other thing. One thing we do agree on—in trying to end this exchange with something we do agree on—I think both the Democrats and Republicans agree the size of the Marines and Army is insufficient. I think there is bipartisan support in the Congress to increase the size of both the Army and the Marines. I think that is something we can agree on. Hopefully, that will be achieved in the coming years.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the